

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress  
2nd Session

Vote No. 65

April 7, 2000, 9:15 a.m.  
Page S-2385 Temp. Record

## BUDGET RESOLUTION/Higher Taxes, More Medicare Spending

**SUBJECT:** Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2001-2005 . . . S.Con. Res. 101. Conrad motion to waive the Budget Act for the consideration of the Conrad amendment No. 3016.

**ACTION: MOTION REJECTED, 44-56**

**SYNOPSIS:** As reported, S. Con. Res. 101, the Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2001-2005: will set total spending at \$1.829 trillion and total revenues at \$2.003 trillion; will cut the debt held by the public (money that the Federal Government owes to creditors other than itself) by \$174 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2001 and by \$996 billion over the next 5 years; will fully fund Medicare (all of the President's proposed \$14 billion in Medicare provider cuts were rejected); will set aside \$40 billion for FYs 2001-2005 in a reserve fund for legislation to comprehensively reform Medicare while providing seniors with a prescription drug benefit; will save the entire \$976 billion in Social Security trust fund surpluses over the next 5 years for debt reduction and will enforce those savings through a 60-vote point of order; will ensure a non-Social Security budget surplus for the third year in a row (which will mark the first time since 1947-49 that the Federal budget has been balanced for 3 years running); will provide for \$13 billion in tax relief for FY 2001 and \$150 billion over the next 5 years (which will be sufficient relief to address the marriage penalty tax, to provide increased health care access to the uninsured, to adopt small-employer tax relief, and to expand educational opportunities); will adhere to the FY 2001 discretionary caps of \$578 billion in outlays but will establish a mechanism to adjust these statutory caps to \$623 billion; will create a firewall to protect the defense budget from being raided for other spending; and will create new points of order to limit advance appropriations, delayed obligations, and the use of the emergency spending designation for non-emergency spending.

**The Conrad amendment** would add a Social Security "lockbox" (budget mechanism) to protect Social Security surpluses from being spent on non-Social Security purposes (the lockbox would be a point of order against such spending; it would take a three-fifths majority vote to waive that point of order; the Budget Resolution as reported already contains such a lockbox for Social Security). The amendment would also add a Medicare lockbox. That lockbox would not protect projected Medicare surpluses from being spent on non-Medicare purposes; instead, it would require the Government to retain one-third of the projected on-budget

(See other side)

YEAS (44)		NAYS (56)		NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (44 or 98%)	Republicans (55 or 100%)	Democrats (1 or 2%)	Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)
Akaka	Johnson	Abraham	Hutchinson	Kerrey	
Baucus	Kennedy	Allard	Hutchison		
Bayh	Kerry	Ashcroft	Inhofe		
Biden	Kohl	Bennett	Jeffords		
Bingaman	Landrieu	Bond	Kyl		
Boxer	Lautenberg	Brownback	Lott		
Breaux	Leahy	Bunning	Lugar		
Bryan	Levin	Burns	Mack		
Byrd	Lieberman	Campbell	McCain		
Cleland	Lincoln	Chafee	McConnell		
Conrad	Mikulski	Cochran	Murkowski		
Daschle	Moynihan	Collins	Nickles		
Dodd	Murray	Coverdell	Roberts		
Dorgan	Reed	Craig	Roth		
Durbin	Reid	Crapo	Santorum		
Edwards	Robb	DeWine	Sessions		
Feingold	Rockefeller	Domenici	Shelby		
Feinstein	Sarbanes	Enzi	Smith, Bob		
Graham	Schumer	Fitzgerald	Smith, Gordon		
Harkin	Torricelli	Frist	Snowe		
Hollings	Wellstone	Gorton	Specter		
Inouye	Wyden	Gramm	Stevens		
		Grams	Thomas		
		Grassley	Thompson		
		Gregg	Thurmond		
		Hagel	Voinovich		
		Hatch	Warner		
		Helms			

**EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:**  
1—Official Business  
2—Necessarily Absent  
3—Illness  
4—Other

**SYMBOLS:**  
AY—Announced Yea  
AN—Announced Nay  
PY—Paired Yea  
PN—Paired Nay

surpluses.

The amendment was offered after all debate time had expired. However, 2 minutes of debate were permitted by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Domenici raised a point of order that the amendment violated section 305(b)(2) of the Budget Act. Senator Conrad then moved to waive the Budget Act for the consideration of the amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to waive favored the amendment; those opposing the motion to waive opposed the amendment.

NOTE: A three-fifths majority (60) vote of the Senate is required to waive the Budget Act. After the failure of the motion to waive, the point of order was upheld and the amendment thus fell.

**Those favoring** the motion to waive contended:

This amendment is designed to safeguard both Social Security and Medicare, which are the two most important programs run by the Federal Government. Members, on a bipartisan basis, agree that the Social Security surpluses should not be spent. Now they ought to take the next step and set aside sufficient funds to pay for Medicare reform and for a prescription drug benefit. We urge our colleagues to support this amendment.

**Those opposing** the motion to waive contended:

Half of this amendment, for the Social Security lockbox, is pointless, because this budget resolution already contains a lockbox to protect Social Security's surpluses. Last year Democrats conducted relentless, and successful, efforts to prevent Republicans from passing this needed protection. Now, though, we are on a budget resolution with a limited amount of time for debate, so they are unable to stop us with a filibuster. Perhaps as a result our Democratic colleagues now say they are happy to support the creation of a lockbox. We welcome their sudden conversion, regardless of any motivations they may have.

The other half of this amendment, to create a "Medicare" lockbox, is just bizarre. Medicare will be running substantial surpluses over the next 5 years, but the amendment ignores those surpluses. Instead, it says that one-third of the on-budget surpluses--the amount of surplus taxes that Americans are expected to pay over the next 5 years--are going to have to be set aside to be spent on Medicare. This new spending of non-Medicare money on Medicare would be on top of the \$40 billion in non-Medicare money that this resolution already will set aside to be spent on Medicare in order to pay for reforms and a prescription drug benefit. Frankly, this amendment appears to have a lot less to do with Medicare than it does with a neurotic fear Democrats seem to have of letting Americans get back part of the excess taxes that are going to be collected. We do not share our liberal colleagues' phobia.

If Democrats want to increase the taxpayer subsidization of Medicare, then let them propose cutting other spending out of our \$1.8 trillion budget to pay for it. If they cannot make any such proposals, that means that they think that every other penny of Federal spending--from foreign aid to federally funded studies of cow methane--is more important than either tax relief or Medicare. They know that their proposals to deny tax relief are not going to pass, but they also know that Republicans would join them in efforts to cut spending in most non-defense areas of the budget. Therefore, if they really were intent on increasing Medicare subsidies, they would propose cutting in those areas. We have not seen any Democratic amendments that followed that responsible course. All of their amendments are focused on denying tax relief. The bottom line is that Democrats want to spend the extra taxes that are going to be collected and Republicans want to refund that money. This amendment should be rejected.